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THE ASSASSIN 

  A Tragedy

in four acts  

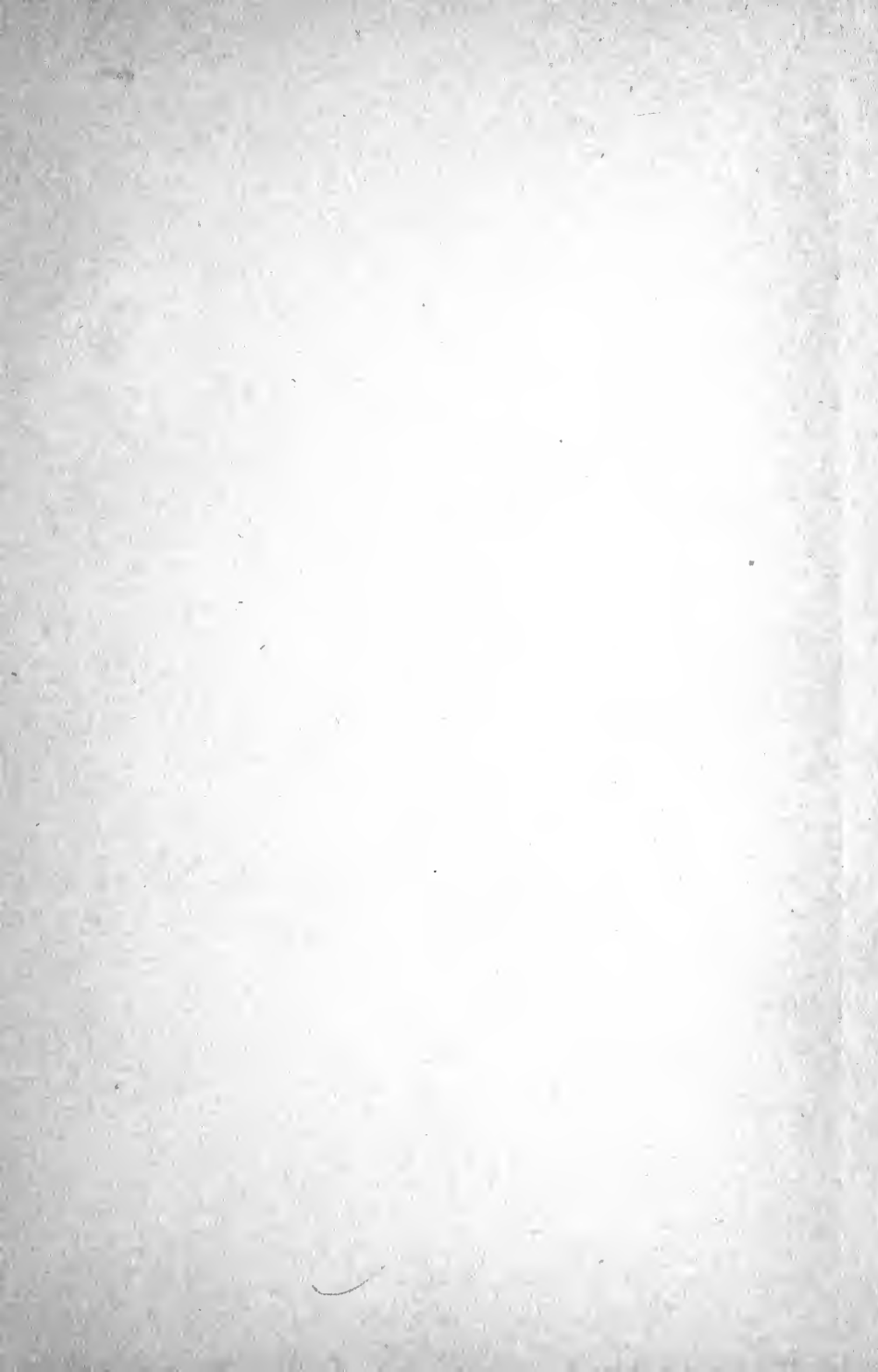
 by Hervey White

The Maverick Press 

 Woodstock, N. Y.

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ACT I

Scene: The vacant stage of the Boca d'Oro Theatre in Miramonte, a capital of a South American Republic.

From the windows in the flies at the right come the strains of martial music and the noise of a procession passing, shouts, applause, etc., first faint, then coming nearer. A call-boy rushes in and shouts to the dressing-rooms, 'The Emperor! The Emperor! This way!' and then rushes back, right. Immediately a crowd of actors half made-up, and dressed in Greek costume, come out pell-mell, and run to the right flies. Their cheers can be heard as the procession passes under the windows.

The music suddenly grows faint, and then comes in strong again from the windows on the left as the procession has rounded the corner. Whereupon, the actors dash madly across the stage to the left flies. They are waving their tunics, scarfs, anything, and shrieking in a frenzy of enthusiasm, 'The Emperor! Viva! Viva! The Emperor!' Cheers and music then on the left, gradually dying away. Finally the actors return to their dressing rooms in a limp and panting condition but exclaiming with wonder and delight. As they retire, Joe, the property man, and Harold May, his nephew from the ranchos, are left on the stage. Joe is middle-aged, blonde, a bit of a philosopher: Harold is also blonde, but a handsome giant on fire with the ideals of youth and at present pale with suppressed enthusiasm. Joe, with a shrug of patience, begins picking up and putting together some of the damaged properties strewn on the stage in the recent flight across it.

JOE. Now, boy, the show is past, we have our work to do.

HAROLD. Did you see his face? Was it not wonderful?

JOE. His face? Of course I saw it. What should I be looking at, his uniform? Not but I saw that, too. He wears more gold of late.

HAROLD. His face was noble; set with high resolve.

JOE. A mask to cover his ambition up. Come, let's to work. Hold you this steady.

HAROLD. (still gazing into space.) I never can forget that face. It bore the dignity of other worlds.

JOE. For my part I would rather see it in the fight, blackened with powder-smoke, and torn with fury. I like not warriors when they turn toward peace.

HAROLD. He is our great dictator.

JOE. Emperor, you should be saying.

HAROLD. I do not fear the word. He is our emperor.

JOE. Fools' tongues are quick familiar with new words. Here, look at what you do.

HAROLD. I see him there, so stately, mild, and calm, turning from fate of war to faith of peace.

JOE. 'Twere better you should see this nail I'm driving. You're less apt to come out with a damaged thumb. As for heroes, if that's what you've come to the city to see, why, you will have them on this stage in the course of an hour; just as big heroes as your Emperor, too. Did I not tell you, you would see Philip LeGrand?

HAROLD. My father has often preached against the stage.

JOE. As I have often preached against your mother for marrying your father. Still, she did well enough.

HAROLD. And, yet, I have often longed to be an actor.

JOE. Well, being an actor, and longing to be one, are as far apart as you and Philip LeGrand himself. Hand me my saw. (Saws off stick.) Then, too, La Teresita is coming this afternoon to try one of her dances. She's greater than Philip LeGrand in my eye; though there are plenty who will not agree with me in that.

HAROLD. It were better I did not see them today. After beholding the Emperor's face I should be shallow to be diverted by a play-actor.

JOE. Oh, things come hot and then cold in the city. You have to get used to it, my boy.

(Enter Teresita Flores in dancing costume. She is about thirty, capricious, passionate.)

TERESITA. All alone, Joe?

JOE. All alone, Miss.

TERESITA. Now you are not alone, either.

JOE. Only my nephew from the ranchos, Miss. He doesn't count.

TERESITA. Every young man counts one, Joe.

JOE. Oho! And the old men? Do they count for nothing, Miss Flores?

TERESITA. After an old man has counted a million, why, sometimes, only sometimes, we - consider him. But I should hardly say we counted him, even then. (Turning very kindly to Harold May,) What is your name, youth?

HAROLD. (with some confusion.) Harold is my name: Harold May.

TERESITA. That is why your hair is so flaxen; and curling, too. But where's your curling beard?

HAROLD. I shaved it off after coming to the city. Uncle Joe said no one wore a beard in the city.

TERESITA. Uncle Joe is a fool. Eh, Joe?

JOE. If you say so, Miss. But I think I was right.

TERESITA. It is the way of fools. Let your beard grow, boy, let it grow. And your name, you tell me, is George.

HAROLD. My name is Harold.

TERESITA. No, I think it is George. St. George I shall call you, I think. Have you ever killed any dragons?

HAROLD. Dragons don't grow on the plains. If they did, I don't think I could kill them. I can't kill a calf, or a sheep. Everybody says I'm a coward.

TERESITA. I don't say that. and I am Teresita. You will remember?

HAROLD. Yes.

TERESITA. Yes, what, youth?

HAROLD. I will remember.

TERESITA. What will you remember, St. George?

HAROLD. (confusedly.) That you are Teresita.

TERESITA. Very good. And you say the name prettily. Now, St. George, I am enslaved by a dragon.

HAROLD. A -

TERESITA. A Rosenbug: a manager, who eats me. I am the rose. He is the bug. Kill him. I think he is coming.

I'll run away. (exit.)

(Enter Charles Rosenberg, manager. He is middle-aged successful, slightly corpulent.)

ROSENBERG. (to Joe.) Seen anything of Teresita this morning?

JOE. She's in her dressing-room, sir.

ROSENBERG. Oh! She is. Who is this young fellow here?

JOE. My nephew, sir, visiting from the ranchos.

HAROLD. My name is St. G -

ROSENBERG. Never mind your name. I don't care to hear it. I don't judge people by their names; I judge them by what they do. Joe, go to the door of number eight and tell Miss Flores that Mr. Rosenberg is here.

Tell her he is waiting, understand?

JOE. Yes, sir.

ROSENBERG, (to Harold,) So, you have just come down from the ranchos, St. Clair?

HAROLD. My name is Harold May.

ROSENBERG. You told me it was St. Clair. I never forget names. I suppose you want to be an actor.

HAROLD. Why, I had thought -

ROSENBERG. Yes: they all think. But after a time they get over it. I wanted to be an actor, too, once. Now, I know better, I am a manager.

HAROLD. I don't think I could ever be a manager.

ROSENBERG. No: everybody can't. But if you want work with your uncle, I think I can give you a job. Why doesn't that confounded -

TERESITA. (entering quickly.) I am here, Mr. Rosenberg.

ROSENBERG. I was swearing at Joe. Good morning Miss Flores. Joe, why haven't you got these things out of the way? (Joe hurries to move back furniture.)

You are more charming than ever, Miss Flores.

TERESITA. When you are at liberty, Mr. Rosenberg, I will show you the new dance I was speaking of.

ROSENBERG. I am ready; I am quite ready, Miss Flores.

Indeed, I have been waiting five minutes. (goes into a box.) Proceed, Miss Flores, proceed. (to orchestra-conductor,) Ricci, all ready. (music starts up.)

TERESITA, (to Harold, who is retiring.) No: You shall stand there, my St. George, then I will dance only to you. (She motions him to the wing next Rosenberg, who does not see this as he is turned toward the orchestra for the moment.)

(The dance begins. As it goes on, other actors in Greek costume come in at the back of the stage, pass on, or pause to watch the dancing. Among them is Mary Avlon, and Harold, who has been watching Teresita, quite absorbed, looks up as from a dream and starts forward, first amazed, then confused, then ashamed. Teresita whirls around with fire in her eye, and, seeing Mary, turns to Rosenberg in a passion.)

TERESITA. I beg pardon, Mr. Rosenberg, but do I have this hour for rehearsal, or does that school-girl, yonder, have the whole day?

MARY. Forgive me. I did not mean to interrupt. I was so charmed with your dancing, Miss Flores,

TERESITA. Or with the beauty of that boy in the flies.

ROSENBERG. Miss Avlon, and all others, retire. Proceed, Miss Flores, proceed.

(Mary and others retire: Teresita goes on with the dance, but petulantly, passionately, entreatingly. Harold keeps his eyes on the ground, his confusion in every way evident. Teresita finally stops with a fling.)

TERESITA. That is all. It is finished, Mr. Rosenberg.

ROSENBERG. And a masterpiece, a charmer, Miss Flores. We will have it this very night. It will save the production. A work of genius, Miss Flores! A capital work of genius.

(While Teresita is standing but half satisfied, the actors again enter at the back but reluctantly, and as if urged from behind. Mr. Rosenberg flies into a rage at the interruption.)

ROSENBERG. Can you not wait, you blundering loggerheads?

AN ACTOR. But Mr. LeGrand says it is eleven o'clock.

ROSENBERG. Mr LeGrand! Who is Mr. LeGrand? I
am Mr. Rosenberg, take notice.

(Enter Philip LeGrand and Fanny Valdez in riding costume, Mary Avlon and others in Greek costume.)

PHILIP. And you were asking for Mr. LeGrand?

(He bows in gay mockery. He is in good spirits, is dark, handsome, on fire with energy. Everybody is worshipping him, and his vanity is at the height of its happiness. He is dressed most elegantly in riding costume, with whip, spurs, and high boots. When he sees Teresita, he ignores Mr. Rosenberg entirely and turns to her.) Buenos dias, little sister, Teresita.

TERESITA, (whirls and gives him both hands.) I will dance for you, Philip LeGrand. Mr. Rosenberg, there is another part, I had forgotten; Do me the kindness to call the music again.

(Rosenberg goes into his box again much discomfited.)

PHILIP. And I will sit at your feet.

TERESITA. It is where you belong, sir, I grant you. But this time I will not allow it. No: stand in front of that country lumpkin there.

PHILIP. (looks at Harold) I fear, sir, you have been slow in your compliments.

TERESITA. Musica! Musica!

(The music strikes up, and, as she dances, Philip answers her in gesture, and then in complementary dance his arms extended as if to embrace her, she, evading, coquetting, inviting. All gather round and applaud: Fanny's jealousy is obvious. When the dance has ended in a whirl, Rosenberg advances, also applauding.)

ROSENBERG. I will have to engage you in a new role,
Mr. LeGrand.

TERESITA. Now, I must go to my breakfast. You may kiss my hand, Sir Philip. (to Harold.) Goodbye, stupid youth, I forgive you, (exit.)

ROSENBERG. One moment, Miss Flores, at your room. (to others.) The rest of you, make ready, and sharp. (Crosses to Fanny.) Ah! Mrs. Valdez! Delighted!

Back to your old haunts, I see.

FANNY. I have been for a ride with Mr. LeGrand.

ROSENBERG. Ah! Charming! Will you stay and see
the rehearsal?

FANNY. I shall be delighted, if it is not against the
rules.

ROSENBERG. With you, Mrs. Valdez, there are no rules.

But when will you be at leisure, that I can see you?

FANNY. Can you call tomorrow, at half past two?

ROSENBERG. Delighted! You know, your wish is my
command.

FANNY. You will not forget the time? Half past two.

ROSENBERG. I never forget an appointment, Mrs. Valdez.

FANNY. Don't forget this one.

(Rosenberg goes out after Teresita. Philip, who has
been speaking with Mary, comes forward to Fanny.)

FANNY. (with mock humility.) Number three is at
your service, Sir Philip.

PHILIP. Nonsense, Fanny! Make an end to your grand
manner.

FANNY. The Spanish coquette disposed of with an ap-
pointment, -

PHILIP. Pshaw! Tush!

FANNY. The doll-faced school-girl always ready at any
moment, -

PHILIP. Have we no more serious business here than
quarrelling?

FANNY, (changing suddenly to strong purpose.) Did
you see his face, today, in the procession?

PHILIP, (glancing around to make sure that they are
not overheard.) Of course I saw it, but is this a place
to talk?

FANNY. I hate him! I hate him! I hate him!

PHILIP. It is not him I hate. It is his position; his
power. What do free men with an Emperor?

FANNY. He conquered my father. I hate him.

PHILIP. The time draws near when he, too, shall be
conquered.

FANNY. Oh, Philip, you hold true in your resolve?
You will not fail us Philip?

PHILIP, (peevishly.) Must I always be rehearsing you
my vows? You will have me exhausted before the first

FANNY. You were so gay when you danced with that
night of performance.
woman.

PHILIP. Would you have me pensive? That would
rouse up their suspicions. It was Hamlet's great mis-
take that he was moody.

FANNY. When you talked with that school-girl you
were sombre.

PHILIP. Must you always be speaking of Miss Avlon?

FANNY. I would speak of what interests you.

PHILIP. I must hasten. It is time for me to dress.

FANNY. You will come to me tomorrow at three?

PHILIP. If you ask me that again I will not come.

Have I not a dozen times made that appointment?

FANNY. Oh, Philip, you know love is doubting. I am
torn by my doubts and my fears.

PHILIP. Tear not me, I'll not endure it. (Changing.)
There's someone. (Enter Rosenberg.)

ROSENBERG. We begin, Mr. LeGrand, in two minutes.

PHILIP. That will oblige me to wait one minute on you.

ROSENBERG. Mrs. Valdez, may I have a word with you
aside? Mr. LeGrand must not be interrupted.

(He leads Fanny out.)

PHILIP. 'Tis a pity it were not he who is the Emperor.

But an artist must not waste lead on a manager.

(Enter Mary in Greek costume.)

Ah, child, you come like my good angel.

MARY. I am neither, Mr. LeGrand.

PHILIP. Neither what, Mary?

MARY. Neither a child, nor an angel.

PHILIP. To me, I think, you are both. We are all chil-
dren until we have sinned.

MARY. I have sinned along with all mortals.

PHILIP. But have repented, and therefore are an angel.

MARY. Are you not going to dress for rehearsal?

PHILIP. No: you did not say that aright.

MARY. How, then, should I have said it?

PHILIP. Are you not going to dress, Philip, for rehearsal.

MARY. I think Philip, often, but cannot say it.

PHILIP. Why can you not say it, little Mary?

- MARY. I do not know: but I cannot.
- PHILIP. Because saying it would be sin?
- MARY. To think sin is as bad is to say it.
- PHILIP. But you can't help thinking of Philip?
- MARY. I think of it all the day long.
- PHILIP. Tell me what you think, child, of Philip?
- MARY. I am so anxious, so anxious about you.
- PHILIP. Why should my sweetheart be anxious?
- MARY. Philip, are you not working against the right? They say that you belong to some societies that are talking against the Emperor, Philip.
- PHILIP. Is it so unusual a thing to talk against the Emperor? But you are right. It is a fault to talk.
- MARY. I do not like this play that you have written. I do not like its name, 'The Assassin'. It is such a terrible name. It strikes terror to my heart. And, oh, Philip, I do not like the part you have given me.
- PHILIP. You do not like the part of loving me?
- MARY. Yes, yes: I like that part: my only part. But, Philip, I would love you in the right; and here I feel you wrong. I feel it, Philip.
- PHILIP. There, there, child, what do you know of such matters? What does a woman know of questions of the state?
- MARY. There is one woman you are willing to consult.
- PHILIP. What! Is my little sweetheart growing jealous?
- MARY. That is a hard word to say to me, Philip.
- PHILIP. Forgive me. Listen, and I will give you explanation. Mrs. Valdez, (rogueishly,) or is it Teresita you were thinking of?
- MARY. Oh, Teresita! You know that I like Teresita.
- PHILIP. Well, then, Mrs. Valdez, dear wee one.
- MARY. You always call her Fanny when you speak to her.
- PHILIP. I know. But I want you to think of her only as Mrs. Valdez.
- MARY. Can I not think in your thoughts?
- PHILIP. No: no: God forbid, my little Mary.
- MARY. I am no smaller in stature than other women.
- PHILIP. It is because you are smaller in their frailties.

There, Dear, you must respect Mrs. Valdez. She is the daughter of a great general, though a defeated one. She is the wife of a man famed throughout the country. She has a great capacity for politics and organization, and she is an old friend of mine. There, Mary.

MARY. To be an old friend may be none the less dangerous.

(Enter Fanny and Rosenberg)

ROSENBERG. What! Not ready, Mr. LeGrand?

FANNY. He has other affairs more important than acting.

PHILIP. I am ready, always ready, Mr. Rosenberg. Miss Avlon and I were waiting for you.

FANNY. You did not seem very impatient.

PHILIP. For you we were impatient, not for him.

ROSENBERG. Rehearsing without costume is impossible.

PHILIP. As impossible as rehearsing without a set stage. If you will permit me to be candid, Mr. Rosenberg, it is you who shows lack of interest in the rehearsal. I am ready. The others have long been waiting. But our court room setting, our chairs for the tribunal, -

ROSENBERG. It will take but a moment to do that. (Calling,) Joe, I say, Joe, Joe,

(Enter Joe and Harold.)

JOE. Ready, sir.

ROSENBERG. Ready! What is ready? Arrange the stage at once for the court scene in Mr. LeGrand's play.

JOE. Yes, sir.

(Meanwhile Philip and Fanny have gone out, left, and Mary has seated herself in the front of the stage and seems lost in thought and very dejected. Rosenberg goes out, right, fuming.)

JOE. (arranging chairs, steps and carpets with the help of assistants whom he calls in and directs.) Things are going criss-cross today. The Devil seems to have got hold of Mr. LeGrand, though I mean no insinuations against Mrs. Valdez. Oh, the women, the women, the women! And yet, how would we get along without them?

HAROLD. (pointing to Miss Avlon.) The one they call Mary, who is she?

JOE. What! You, too? Is the disease getting you?

HAROLD. Who is she?

JOE. Miss Avlon, the leading lady in 'The Assassin'.

HAROLD. She is in trouble. Do you think I could help her?

JOE. Why not? You seemed to get on well with Tere-sita. Now, I am too old. Too old. Just think of that!

HAROLD, (goes up to Mary.) You are in trouble, Miss Avlon, - Mary, - oh, forgive me!

MARY, (smiling at his confusion.) Why, yes, I am in trouble. I forgive you.

HAROLD. I only wanted to ask if I might help you.

JOE. Oh, to be young! Young! Young!

MARY. I do not know who you are, nor whence you came, but your face is true; and, why, if any mortal could help me, I think it might be you.

HAROLD. You mean, - you love Philip LeGrand, oh, forgive me!

MARY, (again smiling.) Why, yes, I love him. We all do that. But that is not the reason of my trouble.

HAROLD. He has gone off with the wicked, sparkling lady.

MARY. Why, even that. But it is not because I am left that I am grieving.

HAROLD. I know. You are too good. You fear for him.

MARY, (looking about in alarm.) Why, yes: I fear for him, and fear for others.

HAROLD. It may be I can help you. You must tell me.

MARY. No: No: It cannot be. I am mistaken. I have such foolish fears. Such vile suspicions.

HAROLD. Who are the others for whom you are in fear?

MARY. For us all. For the State. For the Emperor. There, I did not say it. I am only crazed. You must not hear me.

HAROLD. I saw the Emperor ride by.

MARY. He is noble! He is good! Say that you believe in him.

HAROLD. He is the savior of our people. I have seen it.

MARY. But his work is not yet ended! Tell me! Tell me!

HAROLD. His work is but begun. We must protect him.

MARY. Oh, I am glad to hear you speak. You are like my father. I was thinking when you came to me that my father could help me and he alone. But he is dead. He died fighting with the Emperor. You are like my father now I look at you. Tell me more. Do the souls of the dead come back in living bodies?

HAROLD. No: No: Not that. It is new souls that are born. Not the old ones.

MARY. There is none that can be helpful like a father.

HAROLD. I, too, will be a father in good time.

MARY. You mean?— Oh, you are good. God bless and help you. (breaks down crying.)

HAROLD. Now tell me how I can help you in this thing.

MARY. I must not speak. Besides, I know nothing. Oh, I must not.

HAROLD. You have suspicions.

MARY. They have no foundation. They are shadows. It is only a feeling that possesses me.

HAROLD. I would know that feeling.

MARY. No: No: Do not urge me. I must not!

HAROLD. It is for the Emperor. Him we honor most of all.

MARY. Do not press me. I must go. (starts to go, then turns back) But watch the play. (goes out, then comes back again as if impelled) Watch the play, and if you, too, have suspicions, send a message, a telegram to the Emperor. Tell him not to come to the Boca d'Oro tomorrow night. Not to come ever to witness 'the Assass-in'. It is a fatal play.

HAROLD. He would not give attention to a message sent by me.

MARY. Then sign it. Sign it Jason.

HAROLD. Jason!

MARY. My father's name. He will hearken to the dead. (goes out.)

JOE. Well, my boy, you seem to be in trouble. It's the second time today they've thrown you over. You begin well. I should say you have a genius for beginning. You get the house at the very first line and end up with cabbages and a freeze out.

HAROLD. What is this play they are rehearsing?

JOE. You mean this one they are going to do today?

HAROLD. She pointed here; to these chairs.

JOE. It is Philip LeGrand's play. One he wrote. It is called 'The Assassin', and pronounced to be a winner.

It has never been presented as yet. Is billed for tomorrow night; the first performance. It is announced that even the Emperor is interested. Though usually he doesn't care for tragedy. He says he saw enough of that in the war. Now he wants only comedy or farce.

HAROLD. Does the Emperor come here to see Philip Le Grand?

JOE. To be sure he does. That is his box over there. You shall see how I deck it up with flags and the emblems of the Republic. I mean the Empire.

HAROLD. Will he be here tonight?

JOE. No: you will have to wait one day. You can't eat everything all at once. If you did you would die of indigestion. Tonight, the play is Julius Caesar, Shakespeare. Philip LeGrand will take the part of Brutus.

HAROLD. And the Emperor sits over there!

JOE. You will see! I will look out for that. But they are coming to try "The Assassin". The last act. I don't know why 'tis not the first one. The second is a good one where he stabs the Dictator. Oh, not the real one. You needn't jump. It's in the play. A Greek play they call it. But that's for the costume. Philip LeGrand is like a god in his Greek costume. You will see. He has the part of the man who stabs the Dictator. Oh, he is magnificent! The Dictator is on the right front. Same as you. And Philip runs across the stage and strikes him just like this. (runs and pretends to strike Harold) Then he holds up the dagger so calm and noble and says: 'So perish all the enemies of freedom.' Oh he is magnificent! Magnificent!

(Enter Rosenberg)

ROSENBERG. Joe. Start the bell boy for the rehearsal.

(Exit Joe. Harold retires right. bell rings. Enter actors in a crowd. Philip is with Fanny and still in riding costume).

ROSENBERG. I understood you were to be in costume,
Mr. LeGrand.

PHILIP. Ah, yes; so I was. Mrs. Valdez, will you sit in a box? Mr. Rosenberg, escort Mrs. Valdez to a box. You may as well stay and watch with her, Mr. Rosenberg. I will conduct the court scene today. Ah, yes, the costume. (He flings off his coat and waistcoat, tears his shirt open at the throat, then tears off the collar, cuffs and sleeves, leaving but a few tatters hanging. He binds a handkerchief around his head, seizes a white drapery from one of the girls, binding one end around his waist and throwing the other over his shoulder. All this is done as in a frenzy. Then he calls out with authority and all take their places quickly,) Let the court assemble. (the judges sit on either side a vacant chair. Mary comes in weeping, kisses the back of the chair and then crouches on a footstool in front of it.)

JUDGE. Bring in the Assassin.

(Enter guards escorting Philip bound, hair disheveled, etc.)

PHILIP. Hold off your hands! (he walks boldly out and faces the tribunal) What is your will?

JUDGE. You have killed our chief.

PHILIP. I have killed him. What is your will?

JUDGE. You confess yourself a traitor and assassin?

PHILIP. Assassin, yes. I glory in the word. But traitor, no: I am none. And I stand in this tribunal with its vacant chair, to speak my loyalty of hand and heart to my dear fatherland.

JUDGE. I say a traitor.

PHILIP. No: I say you, no: and give you back denial hundred fold. Who is a traitor? Why, what can you say? A traitor is that man who, being trusted, still betrays the State, desires its ruin. That man am not I. Instead, behold in me the one who, fearless, strikes a tyrant down, who frees his country, gives his life for it.

JUDGE. Was not this dead man our dear State's best friend?

PHILIP. Friends still do often greater harm than foes.

JUDGE. Has he not been a friend as well to you?

PHILIP. One of my oldest, best.

JUDGE. Did he not promise you his daughter, here?
E'en this one stricken low by your vile deed?

PHILIP. His daughter he had promised me to wed.

MARY. Oh, my beloved, I die. You kill me, husband.
Striking my father, you have struck me, too.

PHILIP. Ilene, my sweet, though all our joys were shattered by that blow, yet would I not withdraw the bloody sword so late I drave into your father's breast. What are our lives, our happiness, Beloved, compared with that great good, our noble State? What is our pretty trifling, transient joy to that eternal good, our fatherland? Let us not bind our eyes with selfish bands, but stand wide visioned when our duty calls to give up youth and hope for good of men.

MARY. I loved my father.

PHILIP. Loving him dead is dearer still to you than loving him alive in cowardice. Now we can love him for the good he did; his kindness, his affection, his great mind. The evil that he caused we bury here, and strew the grave with wet repentant flowers.

MARY. He knew no evil.

PHILIP. Intended none, I know. But those intending well, do oft-times ill, go oft astray of good through good intention.

MARY. But he was wise as well.

PHILIP. Wisdom when misdirected works more harm
than petty folly easily discerned.

MARY. I love the State.

PHILIP. Love me, then, its defender, its true son; even as you loved your father, its director.

MARY. Your words are fair. If I but thought them true, I'd make my father's bier my bridal bed, and
join you in procession to the tomb.

JUDGE. Unnatural daughter! Woman, thy very fairest flowers of love spring from the dung-hill lust, wherein they flourish. Back, and hold thy peace!

PHILIP. Though you should seal her lips with iron bands, yet would her eyes speak out their holy fire. And

though you wrought still more, - burned out her eyes, yet would her woman's heart cleave to the truth, which you, with all your learning and your life, must fumble blind before.

JUDGE. Peace! Lead him out to death.

MARY. Then must I follow him.

JUDGE. Thy father is unburied.

MARY. Let me be buried with him. Let us three lie in one grave, three martyrs to the State.

JUDGE. Detain her.

MARY. Who will detain a free-born woman here, when she has done no wrong?

JUDGE. Lead them together, then.

PHILIP. Before I go, I claim the right of speech vouchsafed to every man condemned to die.

JUDGE. The people are enraged, they will not hear you.

MARY. They will if I stand by.

JUDGE. Speak on, then.

PHILIP, (turning to mob.) My citizens, my friends: I am about to die in punishment for having killed a man, for which, according to our own just law, I must pay back the forfeit, life for life. In this, I am content. To die is the reward offered to all men when their work is done. There comes a time when every man can say, - 'My goal is reached, and all, from this point on, will serve to weaken what I now have done.' So is it now with me. So was it with the man I killed today. Look how his blood, still red upon my hands, will mingle soon in harmony with mine, with hers as well, passing from me to her, to her who called him father, yet could stand and give him up as she doth give herself, as she gives me when State demands our doom.

That man had lived his life. Whether for good or ill, Time still must tell. How shall we say who stand now as we do, blinded with civil strife but late subdued, struggling for breath of air from that fierce fray, which makes a brother but a hated foe? How shall we say what is the right and wrong? It may be that a man, such as was this, can come with wilful measures and compel the two foes struggling to release their hold, and set them once

at peace by greater might. This may be so, I doubt, but say it may. 'Tis said there is a time for tyranny and kings, when nothing else will serve. But this I do know, once that time is past, once peace has come and swords are beat to plows, there is no tyrant in the world can come, and, binding a free people for his gain, rule them. This time had come to him.

HAROLD. (leaping forward in his excitement, forgetting it is only a play) 'Tis false! It had not come. It comes to none. Once proven a man is good, once when his wisdom and his strength have brought peace and good will upon a land of strife, you have no right to say his heart has changed. He cannot change from nobleness to greed. There is no tyranny in such a man. He is divine.

PHILIP. (smiling) I have to thank you, sir. Your compliments are put so delicately, I could not take offence e'en though I wished. (to Rosenburg and Fanny)
The play is ended.

(Curtain)

ACT II

(Scene: the library in the house of Mrs. Valdez. A large table is in the centre of the room. Enter Mr. Rosenberg, overdressed, fidgety, but triumphant. He seats himself in an easy chair then gets up and takes a pose at the table watching the door furtively. Then he walks. Then he tries another chair. Then he starts looking at the bookshelves. When Mrs. Valdez does come in he is taken by surprise after all and is conscious of feeling awkward.)

FANNY. Always on time, Mr. Rosenberg.

ROSENBERG. It is the key to my success, Mrs. Valdez.

FANNY. You are a successful man, Mr. Rosenberg.

ROSENBERG. Yes, I can say I have made my own way.

I came a poor boy to the city.

FANNY. Success is the greatest thing in the world.

ROSENBERG. Now, our poets say love is the greatest.

FANNY. It is success in love that is greatest. Misprised
love is but a poor thing.

ROSENBERG. (awkwardly) Speaking of love, Mrs. - -

Fanny - May I please call you Fanny?

FANNY. (roguishly) Not when my husband is present.

ROSENBERG. Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no. Believe me, I
am nothing if not discreet.

FANNY. You have had experience in affairs of the heart?

ROSENBERG. I flatter myself I am no novice.

FANNY. Well, then, you may sometimes call me Fanny.
Only sometimes do I give you permission. Let us say
when I open my fan and hold it so. (takes attitude.)

ROSENBERG. I will remember. Believe me, I will re-
member.

FANNY. And when I close my fan, so, I will be Mrs.

Valdez as always.

ROSENBERG. Believe me, I will not forget, Fanny.

FANNY. Sir, my fan is closed.

ROSENBERG. You take me without warning, Mrs. Valdez.

FANNY. In future give closer attention. Now, I am opening my fan.

ROSENBERG. Yes, Fanny.

FANNY. And shall I call you Isaac at such times. Your name is Isaac is it not Mr. Rosenberg?

ROSENBERG. Charles, Mrs. Valdez, Charles. I should think you'd remember from the papers.

FANNY. My fan is still open Mr. Rosenberg. I have reason, I think, to be offended.

ROSENBERG. Fanny. But you are laughing at me. And you called me Mr. Rosenberg. I, too, have reason to be offended.

FANNY. A man cannot be offended with a woman.

ROSENBERG. I meant to say pained, grieved, surprised.

FANNY. Very well; I will retract. I will say Charles. Oh, yes, I remember the papers: Mr. Charles Rosenberg, presents Mr. Philip LeGrand, our greatest living tragedian.

ROSENBERG. Oh, please let me not present Mr. LeGrand! At least not this evening, dear Fanny.

FANNY. (shutting up her fan with a snap.) Really, Mr. Rosenberg, I do not understand you. If you did not present Mr. Philip LeGrand how would you have access to my house?

ROSENBERG. There, there: I might have known that would offend you. You know that I admire Mr. LeGrand's talent as much as anyone. I may even say it was I who discovered it.

FANNY. It was not discovered. Mr. LeGrand, himself, announced it to the world.

ROSENBERG. At least, you should allow me some credit as a man of business - Mrs. Valdez.

FANNY. It was because I give you credit as a man of business that I have asked for this appointment today, Mr. Rosenberg.

ROSENBERG. You will not call me Charles now?

FANNY. (opening fan) Why not Charlie?

ROSENBERG. Yes, yes; but no, I like Charles better. It goes better with my character, Fanny. It is more dignified, more serious. I am a serious man, Fanny: almost, I may say, I am a stern man.

FANNY. They are the qualities I admire most in a man. Seriousness, sternness, and bravery.

ROSENBERG. Sometimes I think you admire me a little. Eh, Fanny?

FANNY. Your deeds shall determine, Mr. Rosenberg.

ROSENBERG. Oh, you want me to do something for you. I see.

FANNY. I want you to let me take a part in the play tomorrow night.

ROSENBERG. In 'The Assassin'? You would have to speak to Mr. LeGrand.

FANNY. He is willing. I have spoken to him.

ROSENBERG. But your family! Your name! Your position!

FANNY. My name need not be given to the public. As for my family - I was an actress before I was Mrs. Valdez.

ROSENBERG. Your face is everywhere familiar. Your beauty - - -

FANNY. I can easily be disguised by the make-up.

ROSENBERG. What a strange fancy, Fanny, a whim.

FANNY. A woman's whim. Call it what you like.

ROSENBERG. It is difficult. It might be accomplished. But what do I get in return? Remember I am a business man, Fanny.

FANNY. On that night, after the play, you might have a little supper. It could be arranged to be rather private.

ROSENBERG. (overwhelmed with delight) I understand, I understand. I will arrange it.

FANNY. Everything quite as it should be: quite respectable.

ROSENBERG. Oh, quite: quite.

FANNY. (rising and closing her fan) And now I have an engagement, Mr. Rosenberg.

(A sound of the outside door closing.)

- ROSENBERG. And I, too, have an engagement.
(nervously) That is perhaps Mr. Valdez?
- FANNY. He said he was coming home early. Won't you stay and meet him, Mr. Rosenberg?
- ROSENBERG. I should be delighted, charmed, I assure you. But another time. I have an engagement. Give him my compliments, please, Mrs. Valdez. Say to him I admire the position he has taken in the Treasury. Make my excuse. Good night, Mrs. Valdez. (bows himself out.)
- FANNY. Surely that was Philip's step. (Enter Philip)
Oh, more prompt than usual.
- PHILIP. When am I tardy, summoned to your presence?
- FANNY. Stage; stage; stage. Tell me, is there no reality left about you?
- PHILIP. You have taken it all in your keeping. What you see here is the empty husk and shell.
- FANNY. Rosenberg has been here.
- PHILIP. I met him in the hall. I thought he would bite me. Have you not been kind to him Fanny?
- FANNY. He has promised me all that I asked.
- PHILIP. Then you have been kind, even generous. For Rosenberg is not one to give something for nothing.
Not even if he thinks himself in love.
- FANNY. I am to have the part in 'The Assassin'.
- PHILIP. Well, if you will, why you will. A woman's way.
- FANNY. I know that you don't want me. I know that.
- PHILIP. My dear, it is only that I fear for your safety.
- FANNY. My safety is nothing compared to yours. I am sure I shall be of some service.
- PHILIP. Or, if you doubt my determination?
- FANNY. Not for a moment. But, dear Philip, are you sure that the third act is not a mistake?
- PHILIP. You did not like it yesterday. I thought so.
- FANNY. From the point of view of the play it is perfect. But, tonight, it is not a play you are giving. It is reality.
- PHILIP. Yes: reality for one moment. The first one in

my life.

FANNY. But even that moment should be dramatic.

PHILIP. Oh, reality is dramatic always.

FANNY. And it would be so climactically magnificent when you make that run and strike at the Dictator to really strike, with the revolver I mean, of course, - the dagger is not sure enough at such a distance, his friends might have time to shield him, but it would be magnificent to turn with the revolver still smoking and the astonished Dictator not stabbed at all and to say those grand words, in reality to the audience, 'So perish all the enemies of freedom!'

PHILIP. Fanny, you should be the actor, not poor me.

FANNY. Oh, if I were a man! How I wish it!

PHILIP. It is not so heroic when you are one.

FANNY. You do not know the stagnant bitterness of being a woman. What it is to sit and smile and pray and wait.

PHILIP. And yet a woman's life -

FANNY. Oh, do not speak of it. 'Tis more than I'll endure. How think you I feel to sit here tamely and picture your brave deed and dash for freedom, your suffering in silence and seclusion, until the people rise with slow decision and call you back, their hero, their adored. What am I, a woman, but one more to give applause? How will you distinguish me from all the millions; too cowardly to strike out in time of need: only brave enough to applaud when all is safety?

PHILIP. You can do much before.

FANNY. What can I do?

PHILIP. Speak, write, converse, and win the people to me. When the man is dead, there will arise the fury of a tumult that will sweep hill and dale to find and hang me. Then, at that time, in the first days of rage, I fear, even you will feel the pangs of danger. When it is known you were my friend and, maybe, helped me.

FANNY. Let danger come! I welcome it! I love it!

PHILIP. To speak more plainly there have been other times when the people, robbed of their pet idol, and in a rage would even go so far as to hang - women.

FANNY. You will see me swing so gallantly that even flapping petticoats will take spirit and flaunt Freedom's flags, where men's legs wilt and wither.

PHILIP. My Queen! You should have been a man.
God has been cruel to you, Fanny.

FANNY. But he gave me the humility to love you, my hero: and, oh, how that humility burns with pride.

PHILIP. Yes, yes. I know you love me Fanny. And I love you, and therefore I am cautious. No: we must keep our third act, our plea in the court room. In that I hope to do much to mollify the public. They will feel that it was reason and not prejudice that prompted me. No: we must for once, sacrifice the dramatic: I count a great deal on the court scene.

FANNY. Philip, you do not think, you do not fancy that your power, your wonderful influence over the people will tame them, then and there, and make them lift you on their shoulders, bear you through the streets, proclaiming you at once the country's savior?

PHILIP. No: no: not that. Though I would wish it so. It is a shameful thing in me to run and hide like some poor common murderer from the law.

FANNY. They say it must be, Philip. My husband and the others.

PHILIP. I know. I know. Husbands are ever cowards. And the years but bring doubt and conservatism to the hearts of men. I would the world were all at twenty five, Then would I be more sure of this night's fortunes.

FANNY. Suppose the Emperor should not come tonight!

PHILIP. He must. He shall. Has he not promised? I hear my fate say he will come to night. How slow they are, our friends. I am restless.

FANNY. You were not wont to be impatient, Philip, in case my husband and his friends were late. You used to say, the moments spent with me were falling water.

PHILIP. To day, I've other thoughts than those of love.

FANNY. Oh, say not so. Oh, do not say it Philip. Do you not call to mind the day we rode along the river, hand oft clasping hand?

PHILIP. Alas! My hand that day thought not of blood.

FANNY. Blood can ennoble, purify, dear Philip. Was
it not blood of - - - - -

(A noise of footsteps)

PHILIP. Hush! They come.

FANNY. Oh, kiss me, the last time before the first.
And swear! Swear! Philip!

PHILIP. Swear what? Have I not sworn I love you?

FANNY. Yes: yes: not that. Swear you will do the deed.

PHILIP. I swear by our own dear love.

FANNY. Not that: not that. You love another, too.
The name of God were better for an oath.

PHILIP. By God, I swear.

FANNY. No: no: cease, cease. I like the love oath best.
They come. My husband.

(Enter Senor Valdez and six gentlemen. They are
serious and their greetings are brief and quiet. One
Senor Monaco bears a map which he arranges open on
the table.)

VALDEZ. I trust we are not late LeGrand. You are im-
patient.

PHILIP. I have my own affairs all quite arranged. My
only care is that the lagging hours should ride more
speedy.

VALDEZ. You must set patience once more on the
throne.

PHILIP. What?

SENOR CASTRO. The Emperor will not come to night to
‘The Assassin’.

PHILIP. An evil omen - evil.

FANNY. Does he suspect?

CASTRO. Nothing, nothing. 'Tis merely as he said, he
can't endure a tragedy.

VALDEZ. You will find a letter at your room with full
apologies. He comes to-morrow night to see you act in
comedy, ‘The Spanish Quarrel’.

PHILIP. We'll change the bill. He must see ‘The
Assassin’.

CASTRO. It would not do. The people might suspect.
And, then, the Emperor might take offence and take
his leave too early.

PHILIP. Oh, fates of hell how ye do hem me in! Like wild beast in your snare ye drive me on to my destruction.

SEÑOR MONACO. Here is the map, the plan of your escape. 'Twere best you look it over.

PHILIP. A truce with maps and plans. I've done with them. Henceforth my way's untrammelled. Not tonight! Tomorrow! Not 'The Assassin', but a farce instead! I will not brook it.

FANNY. (to the gentlemen) I pray you leave him to his mood untroubled. I'll order tea. We'll make our daily routine of dull life bring him to reason.

(bell rings) What bell is that?

VALDEZ. No fear. I gave commands.

(A sound of disputing outside and the voice of Mary Avlon insisting, 'I know but we are actors. We have come by special orders.')

PHILIP. Mary! Miss Avlon. Let her not come here.

FANNY. (nettled) Why not? Some friends! our tea time! Nothing more!

(Enter Mary attended by Harold May)

MARY. Pardon! I interrupt! Oh, Mrs. Valdez I came to the rehearsal and your man said it was not here. Mr. Rosenberg said I should ask for you. He sent me but this moment from the theatre with this young man for escort. He said he had just come from you and Mr. LeGrand had sent me word at my hotel. Ah, there he is! Good morning, Mr. LeGrand. I see there's some mistake. Shall I withdraw?

FANNY. Withdraw? Why, not at all. A little party of some friends is all. My husband, Señor Valdez, Señores Castro and Monaco. (to butler) Hoskins, the tea.

Why, what, my dear, how timid of you. Some blunder of that Mr. Rosenberg. He's very stupid. Your escort? Please present him. I saw him yesterday. You're very welcome.

(Tea is served. More disputing outside.)

HOSKINS. A lady, Mrs. Valdez, at the door will not be turned away: there's some disturbance.

(All go back to door. Philip leads Mary down front.)

PHILIP. Child, do not stay. Make some excuse and go and take your escort with you. I am much annoyed.

MARY. I did not know. I am sorry that I came.

PHILIP. Oh, 'twas that Rosenberg. I do believe he's jealous now of me. Well, he flies high. Fools do. I'll touch his wing. He's wild for Mrs. Valdez. Paid a visit here tonight and being dismissed saw me coming in the door. So he dispatches you to interrupt. Cocks up some story. Well, go and tell him that you found us kissing, locked in each others arms.

MARY. Oh, Philip, this from you to me?

PHILIP. Come, sweet, be good. Do you not see I'm badgered to my death. Here comes another.

(During this time Harold May has been studying the map lying open on the table. Enter Teresita followed by the others. She is in a jealous frenzy.)

TERESITA. He's here! I knew it. And that pale faced minx. I followed you. I saw. Oh, you're a sly one. Pretend to be so saintly and come here to squeeze his hand and beg him to be good. (turning on Harold May)

And you, too, follow her. You poor blind fool -

PHILIP. LaTeresita! Brava! Brava! Brava! You play your part so well with your mock fire these gentle people all start back and stare thinking you are in earnest. But I'll not be outdone. Behold Sir Philip! (takes role of raging. Others give audience.) Ye shrews of hell, ye hags that hector heaven, and spit your frothy spume into the upward lifting air, gather, assemble round this earth-born one, and learn from her new curses and new oaths with which to stiffen your stale driveling, and give your weak attempts some touch of scorn.

Rage! Rage, good dame. Open your throat and belch your venomous flood till your white teeth are festering ambergris, corroded with the vitriol of your bile; and you become a hag, a snag-mouthed reptile, with every warmth of rose burned from your face, your cheeks cracked parchment, and your lips dead skin that hangs like warts on stinking leprosy. Rage! Rage!

(Teresita stands dumbfounded and others applaud)

softly)

PHILIP. (suddenly changing) And, yet I loved you once: love still, Teresa. My breast is torn with love's grim ragged wounds. At night I crawl the earth and pray to God to let the pity of your tears like rain fall on, and heal me. I am your slave, your worshipper, my sweet; your penitent of the East that throws himself face down with starving moans and prays to Allah in the desert's sun.

And I have cursed you! Even now I cursed. Though once 'tis over all the tide flows back and drowning up my hatred with remorse leaves me a little child, a sobbing child, coming back humbly in full penitence, trembling to be forgiven.

Teresa, oh, Teresa, lay on me but the mantle of thine eyes. Breathe me the fragrance of thy curving lips and though your words are hate and scorn and wrath yet will my heart be filled with gratitude and open like young buds with the May sun.

Your beauty binds me, Sweet. I lift mine eyes to where your rapturous hair ivies the sacred temples of your brow; I catch the enchanted line of sinuous screen that curtains those light walls where all love drinks; I see thy lips part, and I see no more; for all my being cringes slave-like down, and waits the scourge for sacrilegious look.

Teresa, oh, Teresa, scorn not me. Or, if you scorn me, turn me not away. Let me but follow you, a dog, a slave, a worm. Strike at me, crush me, but deny me not.

TERESITA. (sighs and allows him to rise and kiss her hand.) Ah, art, more powerful than the strongest love, more potent even than my jealousy. Rise, Sir Philip. Though you have a thousand loves, yet am I well content with what your genius gives.

Come, I was a fool. Forgive me. And you, too, child, forgive me.

(kisses Mary) We will admire him both together now.

FANNY. I, too, must join. So must we all indeed and

now our little theatre is closed we will return to find our tea grown cold. Hoskins, hot water.

(Curtain)

ACT III

Scene: the stage as before, but viewed slightly from one side showing a tier of boxes on the right, the lower one being draped with flags and blazoned with a coat of arms for the Emperor. The drop curtain seen partially sidewise but well on the right is down. The stage setting is a pavilion in a villa garden in Seville. As the curtain rises, Joe and Harold May are discovered giving final touches. Harold is looking at the Emperor's box. Attendants in rear.

JOE. You see, after all, it is the Property Man that you must most respect. What would they all do without me? Why they would be as helpless as babes. Even the Emperor himself would be but one of the mob if I left him down there in the pit. But I build him a box and drape it with the Imperial flags and colors. I place a big chair in it like a throne and hang the royal ensign up for a canopy. Then when he comes in and sits down, even though he does it a little goutily, the mob goes quite wild with cheering. They little know it is the

Property Man, not the Emperor, that has set them in
such a frenzy of enthusiasm.

HAROLD. Will the Emperor have his body guard
around him?

JOE. The Chief will sit with him in the box; no more.
I place his chair for him, too. Another man made great
by the Property Man. There are others of the body
guard distributed throughout the audience, but who are
they if I give them no chairs different from the others?
A guard is also placed yonder in the flies, but he's a
nobody: I give him a camp stool.

HAROLD. What do you think of Philip LeGrand?

JOE. What do I think of him? Well, that's a puzzler.
You see, he is never twice the same individual. That's
because I give him so many kinds of chairs to sit in. If
I give him a Louis Fourteenth, he is courtly: a Gypsy's
log, he is passionate; a deck chair on a steamer, he is
debonair; a Roman stool, he is noble. On the whole,
he becomes my setting very well.

HAROLD. I mean what do you think of his intellect. Is
it healthy? Is the man sane?

JOE. Lord bless you, boy, all actors are crazy. Have
you been here three days only to discover that?

HAROLD. He speaks fair; he is courteous and kindly.

JOE. When that's his role it's up to him to play it.
You would not expect him to be a boor would you when
I have set for him the chair of a gentleman?

HAROLD. He's back there now, in his dressing-room.
He seems to be in a great rage about something.

JOE. Listen! I'll tell you what's the matter with Sir
Philip. He doesn't like the furniture I've set for him.
He's mad because I have brought out this setting and
said, 'Tonight, you shall be a Spanish hidalgo.' Last
night, this chair would have pleased him well enough,
but I had placed a Greek bench for him instead. To-
night, he wants the Greek bench... is crazy for it... But
'No,' says the Property Man, 'a Spanish hidalgo.' I
have wheeled out this old carved mahogany, and what
must his nibs do but sit in it? Crazy? They're all cra-
zy as bed-bugs. But I know how to handle them. I'm

used to it.

(Enter Rosenberg, an orchid in his button-hole.)

ROSENBERG. Joe.

JOE. Yes, sir. (aside) I wish managers were crazy.

ROSENBERG. I have an order for rose-lights in the Emperor's box. Put them in. Take out the white ones.

(exit.)

JOE. You see? I even give emperors youth, and a complexion. (goes out.)

(Enter Mary, in Spanish court costume. She is looking for Harold.)

HAROLD. Mary!

MARY. What news?

HAROLD. To-night the Emperor comes. He has ordered rose-lights in his box.

MARY. Alas, I fear he's ill, and will not let the people see him pale.

HAROLD. If anything should happen they might say that he was pale from fear: misunderstanding. Have you seen Mr. LeGrand tonight?

MARY. I have seen him. He is sore distraught. His disappointment over last night's play is something I have never seen in him before. Oh, I have my fears. I have my fears for him. Oh Harold, help me save him. (breaks down sobbing.)

HAROLD. It is the Emperor I would save, not him.

MARY. Him, too. We must save Philip, too. You do not know him Harold. He is so good, so gentle and so strong! And his great genius, Harold!

HAROLD. In my eyes he's a common murderer, no more. A murderer, though he has not done the deed.

MARY. You do not know. What do you know? Why, nothing. We have suspicions but we have no proofs.

HAROLD. Mary.

MARY. Oh, Harold, not so harsh. Be not so sudden to condemn untried.

HAROLD. You know he has planned this deed. You know it Mary.

MARY. Harold, I only fear. I have no word of proof.

HAROLD. You would shield him because you love him.

That love is sinful, Mary.

MARY. If he is guilty he is not himself. He's led by that bad woman. She's ambitious. Oh, I know it. But he is not ambitious. Not ambitious, Harold. Oh, he is noble. I have seen him stop, lay all his work aside to help some sufferer. I've seen it many times.

HAROLD. To feed his vanity. I know. I know.

MARY. Not so, his heart is kind. I know it, Harold. And gentle, too, as gentle as a child's. In gentleness, - yes, I'll say it though it angers you, - in gentleness and charity of heart, Philip LeGrand has much to teach you, Harold, I dare to say it.

HAROLD. I know, you love him. You've no need to tell me that. But I love you and I will save you, Mary.

MARY. Be patient but be watchful, too. Here's some one coming. (they retire right.)

(Enter Fanny in Spanish court costume. She is accompanied by a member of the Emperor's body guard.)

FANNY. (indicating Harold) There, that's the fellow. If you would guard the Emperor's life tonight watch well his actions.

GUARD. His name.

FANNY. Harold May, nephew, 'tis said, of the theatre's property man. He may be that, but, much more to the point, he has the friendship of Miss Avlon there.

GUARD. She's loyal. Her father was the Emperor's favorite general.

FANNY. The easier he should make a tool of her.

GUARD. I'll arrest him instantly.

FANNY. Nay, not so sudden. Where is your evidence? 'Tis only my suspicion. But send him from the stage tonight. Make some excuse. Here comes the manager. (Enter Rosenberg.)

ROSENBERG. Ah, Mrs. Valdez! I was looking for you. A charming costume, charming. But, you will be recognized.

FANNY. I'll go in for my make-up. (exit.)

ROSENBERG. (to guard) You'll find a seat within. (is about to go.)

GUARD. A word with you.

ROSENBERG. Well? I'm in a hurry.

GUARD. You have a man in your employ, one Harold May.

ROSENBERG. Well.

GUARD. He must not be upon the stage tonight.

ROSENBERG. What! He's loyal.

GUARD. I have my reasons.

ROSENBERG. But I need him. He helps his uncle with
the heavy work.

GUARD. Another man will take his place tonight.

ROSENBERG. Come, I'll not endure this interference.

GUARD. I have authority.

ROSENBERG. Pish!

(Reenter Harold.)

GUARD. You are Harold May.

HAROLD. Yes, sir.

GUARD. You are excused from duty here this evening.
We need your absence on the stage tonight.

ROSENBERG. But, I say -

GUARD. You have my orders. (to Harold) I'll escort
you to the door.

HAROLD. I don't understand you.

GUARD. That is not needed. Come. (He leads Harold
out.)

ROSENBERG. The insolence of these fellows. We'll see
who is the manager. (As he is about to go out he en-
counters Fanny with her fan open.)

FANNY. Oh, Charles, a moment.

ROSENBERG. Excuse me, Mrs. Fanny, but I am - I
want to see the guard.

FANNY. Oh, yes, about Harold May. It was my sug-
gestion.

ROSENBERG. Yours!

FANNY. There are suspicions at headquarters about
the fellow. Let him go tonight. He can come back to-
morrow.

ROSENBERG. But it interferes. 'Tis necessary.

FANNY. Do this for me. What? Will you not grant
one little thing that I ask? Tonight?

ROSENBERG. I suppose I can get Martin to stay.

FANNY. Do so, please; for me. And ask Mr. LeGrand to come here a moment. I want to see him.

ROSENBERG. He's dressing. And savage as a bear to-night. If he's disturbed, then everything is lost. I've never seen him as he is tonight. He's usually all business.

FANNY. Send him to me.

ROSENBERG. The people are assembling. Five minutes and the curtain bell will ring. The Emperor and his cavalcade have started.

FANNY. Send Mr. LeGrand here.

ROSENBERG. If you stir him up, all's lost. He'll fail.

FANNY. He will not fail. I'll soothe him. Send him here, Charles.

ROSENBERG. Perhaps you are right. I'll have him called. (exit.)

(The orchestra starts up and continues to play throughout the two following conversations. Philip enters. He is dressed in Spanish court costume and is as black as a thunder-cloud.)

PHILIP. Here is your dog. You whistled, did you not?

FANNY. Success! Success, if you can keep that face. Magnificent! And the costume!

PHILIP. Oh, flattery!

FANNY. Oh Philip! How your genius is afire. You'll burn the house tonight! A conflagration!

PHILIP. I wish I could burn the the house in truth.

FANNY. You can. You will. The Emperor will be prostrate. Oh, the Emperor! You are the Emperor!

PHILIP. You would make me his clown: his buffoon.

FANNY. He will be your's ere the first curtain falls. How you will spurn him.

PHILIP. Cajole your fool. Go on.

FANNY. First let me fix your ruff. The lace is disarranged.

PHILIP. Leave it. I'm in no humor for such finery.

FANNY. Bravo, my prince! Incomparable Don Alonzo!

PHILIP. Have done. Have done.

FANNY. (touching his doublet) There's something here I miss. Your pistols, Philip.

PHILIP. I left them at my house. They're for another

part. I wear them only in 'The Assassin'.

FANNY. What! Don Alonzo, and no pistols! Come!
You are no cavalier. What, faint heart?

PHILIP. I tell you I'm not playing that tonight. My
horse is in his stable.

FANNY. We'll send your servant for him. Ring the
bell.

PHILIP. You treat me like a child. I am not your bell-
boy.

FANNY. No; you are a gentleman and I have asked a
favor.

PHILIP. It is?

FANNY. To call your man and bid him have your
horse in readiness at the corner.

PHILIP. I have no need for him.

FANNY. 'Tis I who have the need. Or, stay a mo-
ment. Your horse might compromise you, I being
caught in flight. Tell him to hire a public horse; man's
saddle.

PHILIP. Fanny, you're mad.

FANNY. Yes, I am mad if mad means being deter-
mined. (pointing to Emperor's box) He dies tonight.
The cause has still one friend.

PHILIP. I did not bring my pistols, there's no time.

FANNY. I guessed as much and so brought mine for
fear. (shows pistol.)

PHILIP. Give it to me.

FANNY. No; never.

PHILIP. Shall I take it from you?

FANNY. Are you Philip LeGrand?

(Philip crosses stage and rings a bell. Enter call boy.)

PHILIP. My servant.

BOY. Yes sir.

(Enter Ephriam, a colored servant.)

EPHRIAM. Master.

PHILIP. Go to my house; tell Murdoch instantly to
have my horse in waiting at the alley as I arranged for
him to do on yesterday. No dallying.

EPHRIAM. Yes sir. (exit.)

PHILIP. Now give me the pistol.

FANNY. You will use it ?

PHILIP. Do you doubt me ?

FANNY. I never did. (crying) Can you not kiss me,
Philip?

(In taking the pistol he kisses her hand.)

PHILIP. There's danger here. You saw it loaded ?

FANNY. My own hands saw it.

PHILIP. Fanny, you'd make a worm turn to a man.
Go, now and leave me. (He steps up to the drop curtain and peeps out, looking toward the Emperor's box.)

Fanny goes out. He examines the pistol.)

PHILIP. A good medicine. Her father's pistol.

(Enter Mary looking for Philip. She sees the pistol which he conceals in his dress.)

PHILIP. You, child ?

MARY. Did you hope to see some other ?

PHILIP. Who is so fair as you ?

MARY. Call me not fair, dear Philip. I would I were not so. I would I were the ugliest woman born, had I that quality I lack and need.

PHILIP. You have all qualities, my sweet.

MARY. No; no; I lack the greatest.

PHILIP. What is that ?

MARY. Dear Philip, power to make you see the right.
And, seeing, do it.

PHILIP. What is right, child ?

MARY. To love one's neighbor.

PHILIP. It is because I love my neighbor so, I dare to undertake the thing I do.

MARY. What thing ? What thing ?

PHILIP. Nay, child, you know but peace.

MARY. My father was a warrior. As a child I knew the stir of drums, the screaming life.

PHILIP. But blood. You knew not blood.

MARY. Blood, too, I knew; and many a yawning wound I've held together till the sister came to bind it with firm linen.

PHILIP. A hospital is different from the field.

MARY. But Philip, Philip, I know of battles, too. The rules of war. I've conned them over from a little girl,

hearing my father. And Philip, Philip, oh, forgive the word. I will not say it, but you know it, Philip. Oh, strike me now.

PHILIP. What word. I strike you? Wherefore? I strike you? What word, dear Mary?

MARY. The word they call a man who shoots from ambush. Now strike me. Strike me.

PHILIP. You mean a coward?

MARY. (crouching) Now spurn me. Kick me. Crush me with your feet.

PHILIP. A coward! And from you! You mean it, too. You feel I am a coward for you wait my blow. You think I'll kick you! You! And who am I? Philip Le-Grand?

MARY. Your words are worse than blows. Forgive me, Philip.

PHILIP. Little Mary! Sweetheart; child; my love: listen sweet Mary.

MARY. Kill me. Do not speak.

PHILIP. My father was an actor, like myself. Not a great soldier, he, with code of honor. Yet, he was a good man, gentle, generous, true; and never once, I think, did one base deed to stain his name or mine. He often said to me, 'Philip, I have no name to give you but a clown's, a jester's, one whose highest aim in life has been to make men briefly smile, forgetting life's dull woe. It is not any name. I know that well. Throw it aside and take a worthier. Forget it, Philip, but remember this: your father was a man who loved the right and did no more of wrong than sinning man must do in earthly blindness. Do you the same.'

MARY. He speaks! Your father speaks! Oh, hear him, Philip!

PHILIP. Perhaps he does. Well, there, (he takes the pistol from his dress and sends it whirling across the floor) there is my answer.

(Enter Fanny.)

PHILIP. (to her) We were rehearsing the scene in the first act.

FANNY. But the act is not complete without me on

the stage.

PHILIP. No: I need you both. I stand between you.

FANNY. Your sweetheart and betrothed, which will win?

PHILIP. Neither. I conquer both. It is my part, being
the man.

(Sound of trumpets in the orchestra.)

PHILIP. The play begins.

MARY. The Emperor!

FANNY. The Emperor!

(Enter the Emperor and his attendants in the box right. Flourish of music, applause etc. Philip, Fanny, and Mary stand waiting. As the applause subsides enter Ephriam. He goes up to Philip and hands him two
pistols.)

EPHRIAM. Here, Massah LeGrand. I come from Mr. Murdock. He says you'll need these pistols in the play,
and that the horse stands ready.

PHILIP. Good! He is thoughtful, Murdock.

(He takes the pistols and binds them on over his doublet. The curtain bell rings. Philip, Fanny, Mary, and Ephriam retire. The music strikes up again, the curtain rises on the play, applause. Enter two clowns, the first is roaring with laughter, the second is trying to find
out what it is about.)

1ST CLOWN. Alonzo! Don Alonzo! Ho! ho! ho! ho!
ho! ho! Oui! I'll die! I'll die!

2ND CLOWN. You say Don Alonzo? What has he done?
Come, tell me.

1ST CLOWN. What has he done? Oh, the side-splitting-
est, the laughingest, the uproaringest! Hoo - i - i! I'll
die! I'll die!

2ND CLOWN. Good fellow, tell me.

1ST CLOWN. Ho! ho! ho! ho! ho! O - u - i! O - u - i!
O - u - ah! O - u - ah! O - u - a h! (stops laughing as
if he had strained himself.)

2ND CLOWN. (guessing) He's bruised the barber's wife,
she who's so lean and bony and stood her up before the
mirror in the hall, the one that makes you fat, and told
her that she now has grown that way through his great
medicines?

1ST CLOWN. No: no: How could he now? Although she saw, she could not be convinced. She'd feel her bones still pricking through the skin.

2ND CLOWN. He has brought the old cattle drover back and told him he was married to a black peddler wench while he was in liquor.

1ST CLOWN. He did that already yesterday. How could he do it again today?

2ND CLOWN. Tell me, now, what he's done.

1ST CLOWN. (again laughing) Ho! ho! ho! ho! ho!

2ND CLOWN. Why don't you tell me?

1ST CLOWN. Guess, guess, guess. Guess again.

2ND CLOWN. Another wench, perhaps?

1ST CLOWN. Now you've hit the nail. For each wench is a nail in a man's coffin. Yes, a wench, a full fair wench, fresh from the country side, a peasant wench, full fair.

2ND CLOWN. What is the game? the play?

1ST CLOWN. Full fair: full fair! He tells her she's a princess hid away from out her father's royal court at infancy,

2ND CLOWN. Whose infancy?

1ST CLOWN. Her's, you fool. And Don Alonzo is her cousin, so he says, and his part is to restore her to her throne and wed her to Don Carlos.

2ND CLOWN. Why not himself?

1ST CLOWN. Oh there's Dona Inez. She's jealous as a - as a, as a - a - a crocodile.

2ND CLOWN. Are they jealous?

1ST CLOWN. Crocodiles? M - m - m - m - something terrible. I've known them to eat up, eat up, eat up a - a hemisphere out of pure jealousy.

2ND CLOWN. Oh - h - h.

1ST CLOWN. Yes, as I live, and lie.

2ND CLOWN. And she's to wed Don Carlos?

1ST CLOWN. Yes and he's a prince. No less, they tell her, than the prince of Arragen. And every one is making up in play. I'm the court jester. Whoop! ! !

2ND CLOWN. What can I be?

1ST CLOWN. Remain yourself. She'll never take you for

a man. Whoop! ! !

2ND CLOWN. They're coming now!

1ST CLOWN. It is the wedding train! Hoop! Hoop!
Hooray!

(Enter musicians and attendants in livery, then ladies and gentlemen in Spanish court costume, Fanny is Dona Inez the betrothed of Philip who is Don Alonzo. Teresita is the Duchess dowager, his noble mother. All take places each side of the chairs arranged by the pages for the throne. Then enters Don Carlos, a fat florid glutton, with Mary on his arm in bridal robes of a princess, A mock marriage has already taken place; they are now to crown the Queen, All shout 'Hail, to the Queen? The King and Queen of Arragon!' Don Carlos and Mary are seated and Mary is crowned. She moves as in a dream. All crowd around to pay her honor.)

TERESITA. I trust my royal daughter slept the night,
for there are many wakeful ones ahead.

FANNY. Let Dona Inez give her mistress greetings.

PHILIP. Alonzo following them.

MARY, (as if awaking.) Alonzo?

(Fanny draws Philip away. Others pay duty to the Queen.)

FANNY. How dazed she looks! You'd think she'd swell with pride, and flaunt her feathers like a barn-yard fowl that suddenly had come to peacock's plumes.

PHILIP. You'd think so, yes.

FANNY. I believe you are repenting. Poor Alonzo!

PHILIP. Nonsense, sweet Inez! 'Tis the excellence of the sport has sobered me. It makes me speculate on human nature, - what things would be if things were otherwise, and, all a sudden, rank should be reversed, the great be lowly, and the lowly, great; the rich, poor; and the pitied penniless, rolling in gold;

FANNY. 'Twould not be possible!

PHILIP. But being possible, 'twould not be different; the high would cringe and fawn, the rich beg lustily. The priest would seize a maid with soldier's zeal; and that same soldier, clad in priestly robes, prattle his

prayer.

FANNY. Look at Don Carlos. He seems more affected than does the wench herself.

PHILIP. Yes, it is he who seems the real plebeian trick-ed in the stranger finery of a king. She's quite the princess, vested with her right, but now cast down by grief and melancholy.

FANNY. Nonsense, Alonzo, she's a simple peasant girl. Can you not see it?

PHILIP. When, royal Inez, once I look at you, I feel the difference whereof you speak. Your eyes are other and your brow is noble. Your walk is queenly as your silent bearing.

FANNY. Pshaw! Pshaw!

DON CARLOS. (advancing) Now, all my subjects, let the dance go on. Then to the feasting. Alonzo first is honored by our Queen. I lead the royal mother.

PHILIP. (advancing to Mary and bowing low) This favor quite o'erwhelms my wildest dreams. (A dance of eight is formed. Teresita and Don Carlos lead.)

MARY. Why do you mock me?

PHILIP. Madam, upon my honor as a knight (hesitates)

MARY. What pledge you on your honor as a knight?

PHILIP. I pledge myself forever your protector, your follower, lover, subject.

MARY. Will you protect me then, from that foul man?

PHILIP. I swear to do it.

MARY. Why did you bring me here?

(Teresita, who has been conducting the dance, pauses with Don Carlos, and Mary, to the surprise of all, steps forward leading Philip, dancing with understanding of the forms but without spirit.)

FANNY. (to her partner) This is no peasant girl. It is a trick on us. Alonzo turns his wit against his friends. (Mary and Philip return. Fanny and her partner dance.)

MARY. Why did you bring me here?

PHILIP. Who are you? Tell me that.

MARY. You have told me, my lord. What should I

tell?

PHILIP. I thought you were a peasant girl: no more.
You are not that.

MARY. You thought - -

PHILIP. It was a trick, a jest. We called it sport. For-
give me.

MARY. You brought me to that man in jest?

PHILIP. Not that. Not that. I meant to rescue you
from him and take you far away.

MARY. Whither? To my own home?

PHILIP. I did not know where you would wish to go.

MARY. But thought 'twould be to you, my lord, per-
haps.

PHILIP. I thought you were a peasant girl. Forgive me.

MARY. And, being a peasant girl you had the right to
throw away my innocence? My life, my honor, and the
honor of my people were nothing if I had not rank or
wealth?

PHILIP. Not that. Not that.

(They dance again. Mary with spirit and pride. All
marvel at her. She and Philip return and Teresita leads
again.)

PHILIP. Who are you?

MARY. 'Tis true I am no peasant. Though my birth is
wrapped in mystery, yet have I had some teaching
from a lady reduced to poverty but saying always the
day would come when I should need to know these
things. I always thought 'twould be a day of joy, not
one like this.

PHILIP. Forgive me.

MARY. When you came to me, I thought it was no
more than was my right. I trusted you alone. That was
my only folly.

PHILIP. Not that. Not that.

MARY. My true name is Maria de la Rey.

(They dance again. Then partners are exchanged. Ter-
esita is with Philip.)

TERESITA. You're sad, my son. The sport is strange.
What say you?

PHILIP. I, sad? Strange sport?

TERESITA. She dances not like any peasant maid.

PHILIP. Some lady taught her. Other ways she is a fool, quite dumb. Wait till you hear her speak. (Mary returns in her dance to Philip, as partners are taken again. He is much distressed.)

PHILIP. Your father was my father's deadliest enemy. Breathe not your name to any living soul. My mother thinks your family is dead. Leave all to me. Speak not at all, or in the peasant's way. Leave all to me. (Again partners are changed and Fanny comes forward to dance with Philip.)

FANNY. You take the sport full seriously, Alonzo. You're quite the noble knight.

PHILIP, (affecting to laugh) Her speech is wonderful. 'What a good place this is for cows,' she said, meaning the park. 'We have a cow at home that gives twelve quarts of milk five times a day. I'll bring that cow and keep her in the hall. 'Tis a warm place to stable.'

FANNY, (aside to Philip) The dance once ended I'll go to the box, engage the Chief Police, make him withdraw. Then do you shoot. Shoot! Shoot! And shoot to kill!

(Philip is thrown quite out of his role by this and as it is his cue he stammers, and looks helpless. The other actors seeing his distress try to help over the difficulty. Teresita starts a dance as if to teach Mary an old Spanish step. Fanny goes out. Mary ever watchful comes forward with her lines which should be given later on in the scene.)

MARY. I would that I might plead with you my lord for gentle living and for peaceful means.

(Philip turns to her in surprise quite out of his role. Fanny enters the Emperor's box and speaks with the Chief of Police taking him out with her.)

MARY. (continuing.) I see your face is curled and creased with shame; but in it I see, too, the good shine out, like light of day behind the mask of night. I plead not for myself. Do as you will with me. It may be in my fate you'll learn some little tenderness, which any wanton feels sometimes, I think, when fresh, young

flowers are thrown down in the mire and trodden underfoot by careless ones. 'Tis for yourself I plead, not me. You have the spirit of a noble man, but now gone wide astray, and wandering in the ways of lust and vanity. Take heed that all your gaiety turn not to bitterness and suicide, and what has bid in you a fair young growth, come out excrecence, like that monster there.

(Mary has caught Philip's hand in her earnestness, when Fanny appears in the box a moment, signals him and then retires. Philip finally breaks away from Mary, rushes toward the Emperor, and speaks to him direct. All the actors are astounded. Mary follows Philip, but is powerless to stop him.)

PHILIP. Tyrant, step forth and fight. Draw your sword. (To Mary, who catches his wrist.) Fear not, I will not shoot. (Draws his rapier.) This is my weapon. Here's no cowardice! (to the Emperor,) Draw, you, or prove yourself the coward, now. Draw! Draw! (He is in a frenzy. The Emperor, pale, startled, rises, steps out as if to come on the stage. Harold rushes up from the pit and flings himself in front of the Emperor)

HAROLD. Your subject, Sire. Give me the leave to fight. Your wars are o'er. Give me your sword,

my King.
(The Emperor steps out on the stage, shaking Harold off. His blood is up. He draws his sword, and advances, on guard, to meet Philip. They fight. The Emperor is hit; but Harold, again rushing in, receives the force of the blow on his hand. Philip gives another thrust, then, with a flourish, cries: 'So perish all the enemies of Freedom!' and leaps off the stage. He falls but rises, and runs on.)

HAROLD, (rising, his hand hurt.) He has killed the Emperor!

EMPEROR, (supported by friends.) Not so, my children. I still live. It is a scratch. I pray you be at peace.

(Music starts up, and the Emperor and his party retire in order across the stage. curtain.)

ACT IV

Scene: A secluded grove on a ranche, the home of Mary Avlon. A shepherd's hut is in the centre, back. It is night. The moon comes out of the clouds after the curtain rises. Mary comes in carrying a basket of provision. She goes up to the door of the hut.

MARY. Philip! Philip!

PHILIP, (comes out. He is pale and haggard. His head is bandaged.) The day has been a long and sad one, Mary, but now that you are come, come with the rising moon, I feel the gentleness of sweet content.

MARY. I bring you food. My people do not know; and none suspect me.

PHILIP. I think you are my moon, Queen of calm thoughts and peace. My sun has set. A burning day it was, but now the moon is shining healingly. I feel its beams play softly on my grave.

MARY. Speak not of graves. They hold weak women's hearts whose bodies still are wandering. (weeps.)

PHILIP. Sweet moon, come out from midst the blotting clouds; they blur my vision.

MARY. You are suffering. Let me dress your wound.

PHILIP. No: no: not that! Sit here, and let me see you.

MARY. You must eat.

PHILIP. My eyes are ravenous. And although my lips express the hunger of a fortnight's fast, 'tis not the

food you proffer makes them yearn. 'Tis what you do
with hold.

MARY, (kisses him.) Let lips be satisfied.

PHILIP. Mary! Can you kiss me?

MARY. Hush! Hush! Not that! Lets talk of merrier
things; of days long past.

PHILIP. Or days to come.

MARY. No: no: the past. There are no days to come.
The past is all, for you and me henceforth, Do you re-
member the first time we met, when I was but a timid
trembling country girl come up to town to try my for-
tune on?

PHILIP, (fondly.) What are you now?

MARY. Not timid more. How brave you looked to me
when you came out, your dark eyes flashing fire, your
raven locks -

PHILIP. Come, come, no stage-talk now! (he faints,
then recovers.) There! Kiss me, Mary.

MARY. Now you must eat and drink. Oh, do you not
repent? Do you not fear to die, and face your maker?

PHILIP. Did he not make me thus? Well, come, no
tears! Give me the wine, and though I know no thirst
'twill come as nectar poured from your dear hands.

MARY, Here! And here! Let me arrange a table for
you, so. Although I tremble for you every hour, still
do I feel the happiest content that I may wait on you.

PHILIP. Have you heard aught of news? The Emperor?

MARY. He was not harmed. Your sword struck Harold
May, an' gave him a slight flesh-wound in the hand.

PHILIP. I'd best remained a clown, It is my part.
Reality is not a life for me.

MARY. Your love is real.

PHILIP. But badly played; distorted, warped, perverse.
Are the sleuths on my track?

MARY. They follow up the track that was mapped out
and seen by Harold May that day before upon the table
in the Valdez house.

PHILIP. And Valdez? Fanny?

MARY. All have escaped; fled to the country-side; so
great was the confusion,

PHILIP. Poor Fanny!

MARY. Poor Philip!

PHILIP. And poor Mary, too.

MARY. No: name me not with her. Even to be pitied even to be loved with her, were shame and infamy.

PHILIP. Did you not hear some noise just now? some stealthy foot-fall in the underbrush?

MARY. Your weakness makes you fearsome. Eat, dear Philip.

PHILIP. Hush! (rises, and seizes pistol.) Who goes there?

(Enter Fanny. She is worn, and half crazed from wandering in the woods.)

FANNY. I thought as much! Safe in the school-girl's arms!

PHILIP. You, Fanny!

FANNY. Fanny. Who else?

PHILIP. How come you here?

FANNY. 'How come you here?' And not a word of welcome after these fourteen days of flight and loneliness!

MARY. I'll go, and leave you.

FANNY. No: You will stay. I do not trust a traitor out of sight.

PHILIP. Child, you may go. Come back again tomorrow.

MARY. I'll go but out of hearing. I will watch outside for any danger.

FANNY. Stay if you wish to see a woman loved. Stay if you wish to know of human passion: its depth, abandon, recklessness, and sin. 'Twill teach you something for your mimicry: and vastly different from the puny drivel you think is love and weakly answer to. You are not meant to love. Your life is shallow. What passion can attach to your thin arms, flat breast, insipid lips!

Now here are kisses men are wild to seize! Here breasts and arms that drive the saints to frenzy, as they will Philip, now. (Mary goes.) What! Will not stay? Gone? Run away? Afraid? Poor whimperer!

PHILIP. Fanny, have done. Your jealous frenzies now have little meaning to a man like me. When, for a

fortnight, one has fled from death, has listened, shuddered, and kept watch each moment, until, grown weary, he has turned and smiled, and said, 'Come, Welcome,' to the wolf that haunts him, - at that time, there is little left for love save of the kind that is immortal, Fanny. One thinks not longer of the love of flesh, but only of that love of innocence, that lasts through death, endures through fire and torment, cares only to love on, to aid and comfort, seeks not return, enjoyment, satisfaction... Such love is all for me.

FANNY. All hail, Saint Philip!

PHILIP. Saint if you like. I think if I had always known such love, I had been sinner less.

FANNY. And not a murderer?

PHILIP. Murderer I am not now. I bungled that. But, being a murderer, I but thought it duty, and neither you nor any woman ruled.

FANNY. I set you on... Had it not been for me -

PHILIP. Had it not been for you - what then? The time, the place, the manner had been other, the deed been deadlier done.

FANNY. You cheat me out of that?

PHILIP. Fanny, if you come to stand before a jury and your life on trial, you'll be full glad for what I tell you now.

FANNY. Let them try me.

PHILIP. You say so now. But wait the sea of the condemning faces. Wait for the stillness and the forms of court; the twelve dull men, who in half wakeful sleep, let slip your quivering life from listless hands. Wait till the gallows with its swinging vision looks in upon your ghostly prison cell; then will you thank me that I set you free from this, my action.

FANNY. Oh, Philip, cease! (She cowers down shuddering.)

(Enter Mary.)

MARY. Hide! Hide! Go in! Some men on horses scour the neighboring wood. Go in, dear Philip.

PHILIP. I will not hide.

MARY. Go! Hide! For my sake! Go, go, Philip!

PHILIP. Good bye, now, Mary! Now, good bye forever!

MARY. They shall not find you! I will stay and speak.

Oh, I'll be subtle! They will never find you,
FANNY, (screaming.) Yes, yes, they shall. The traitor's here. He's here! Here is the would-be murderer that you seek, locked in his mistress' arms. 'Twas she who drove him to it! (She falls in a faint.)

PHILIP, (to Mary,) For your sake, Sweet, I hide. But this one shares my guilt. (With a violent effort he drags Fanny inside the hut.)

(Enter Harold May.)

HAROLD. Mary! Miss Avlon!

MARY. Yes, Harold May.

HAROLD. What do you here?

MARY. This is my native heath; my childhood's home. 'Twere better that I ask, 'What do you here?'

HAROLD. I seek that traitor. Who was it that called?

MARY. It was the traitor called. You thought 'twas I?

HAROLD. You can't deceive me, Mary. Oh, I know the meaning of that fire in your blue eyes. You have concealed him, Mary.

MARY. And if I have, 'tis from your cruelty. You, who would track a broken stag to death, and turn your blood-hounds on him.

HAROLD. A mad dog must be shot. He will bite others.

MARY. A dog may turn and bite his master, even, and have no touch of rabies.

HAROLD. We will not argue, you and I will not: two born to help each other.

MARY. You have helped me. You have. I thank you for it. With all my life to come I'll thank you Harold.

HAROLD. But now, you'll help not me.

MARY. How do I help you, yielding him to you? He dies in torment from his tortured soul. Why should you fret him?

HAROLD. He is dying, then?

MARY. He scarce can live the night out. He is wounded. Struck in the head by some stone from the mob. His face is crushed and broken. Oh, if you saw him, Harold - his white, hunted face - two weeks he's wan-

dered in the wilderness, the hated quarry of enraged mankind. If you but saw his eyes, his broken mouth,

you'd pity him; yes, even Harold May.
HAROLD. You love him still.

MARY. I love him, yes. I love all suffering men. As Christ loved Judas hanging from the tree, and died to save him.

HAROLD. Judas was not saved.

MARY. He was not? Not if you had been the judge. Not if the mob doled out compassion's tears. But there's a higher.

HAROLD. Mary, I love you.

MARY. Oh, Harold, break not down my last defense. I am a woman.

HAROLD. I love you. Be my wife when he is gone. I'll love his widow; cherish what he leaves.

MARY. Harold! Harold!

(Enter Philip. He is calm, in full control.)

PHILIP. She is not mine. Nor ever could have been. A saint was never yoked to one so vile. She was my better angel, that was all, who broke her wings against the dragon's webs, and now lies bleeding.

MARY. Philip!

HAROLD, (to Philip, pointing to Mary who is weeping) Behold your work!

PHILIP Would that it were my work, would that it were. Then should I rise straight up to Paradise for one sweet deed against a life of failures. But not so. I have my work in life to answer for, but this is not my doing. You, sir, you do not know the treasure you possess; you have no sense of value. Think you this angel grovelling for my sins is mortal in her wounds and will not rise! Oh, you mistake her! When you and I are given to the winds, the good she does will flourish like a tree that blesses Eden's valley. But I rave. Forgive me. I am an actor, even with my dying breath, I know no better. (He sinks back, gasping.)

HAROLD. I have sought your death.

PHILIP. You have no need to seek. It comes to you. (A shudder passes through him.)

MARY. Oh, Harold, hold him up! I'll give him wine.

PHILIP. There is no need. Join hands, you two: join hands.

(They look at each other dazedly, then at Philip. He takes their hands, and they, seeing what he will do, clasp them as if in the marriage ceremony.)

PHILIP. The play is ended, and the actor dies. Watch him. A rare lesson.

(He dies. The two sit before him with clasped hands. A noise of men, hounds, and horses.)

MARY. The soldiers! Quick! Carry his body in!

(Harold picks up the body of Philip and carries it into the hut. Enter soldiers in haste.)

CAPTAIN. She said it was this hut. He's hiding there. Set it on fire.

(Soldiers fire the straw hut. It bursts into flames. Harold supports Mary who is half fainting. Enter Fanny, crazed. She runs wildly about the stage.)

FANNY. They snuff the blood upon my hands! On mine! Oh, hounds of Hell! (She flings herself into the burning hut, and dies, shrieking.)

HAROLD, (supporting Mary, holding up his wounded hand.) So perish all the enemies of Freedom!



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